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March 1951

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LGS

Local Government Service

Journal of the National Association of Local Government Officers

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Picturesque anachronism?

HOW ARE THE transfers of powers among the Government departments likely to affect local government? Will they result in the more expeditious discharge of business, a clarification of central-local relations, and, above all, a resolute lead in the reform of local government structure?

The changes provide, on balance, a more logical and convenient distribution of functions. In this matter, as in most, the ideal is unobtainable: every specialist would like his own subject—housing, medical care, planning, or whatever it may be—to be the sole care of a single state department, but this would atomise the central administration and deprive it of cohesion.

Whether the changes will give the new Ministry of Local Government and Planning time and vision for the long overdue job of recasting local government depends in part on the internal stresses of the department. Burdensome though its planning duties are, perhaps it is true that they are now mainly administrative, and do not call for the full-time attention of the political head and his immediate advisers; if so, they may be able to turn their minds to what is bound to be an intricate and controversial issue. But they will still need pushing from outside.

That there is little general demand for local government reform was frankly admitted even by so earnest an advocate as SIR MALCOLM TRUSTRAM EVE, chairman of the late Local Government Boundary Commission, in a recent address on the future of local government. Yet the demand, he said, is stronger today than it was when the reconstruction of 1888 was carried through, and the present need is even greater than it was then. Above all, he argued, we must get rid of the very small authorities with resources so inadequate that they cannot employ essential staff; it is because such authorities exist within every category of local government body that Parliament is increasingly unwilling to entrust powers to local authorities and has taken away many which they possessed.

Sir Malcolm's plans will evoke controversy, as any reforms are bound to do. For the part of England and Wales outside London, the proposals are already embodied in the reports of the Local Government Boundary Commission and they are probably the most practicable compromises yet put forward. They were based, he remarked, on close local study of the problems by the commissioners on the spot, and not "at a desk in London." Whether his plan for London government has equally been worked out after consultation with local people he did not say.

The principles of the scheme are commendable enough. Areas are to be as small as is compatible with efficiency so as to make contact between elected members and citizens as intimate as possible. This is good general doctrine, but there is a danger that councillors who are too close to the electorate may decide issues on personal and not on general grounds. Should not most of the personal contact be undertaken by staff rather than by councillors? It is surely even more important that teachers, education welfare officers, health visitors, sanitary inspectors, and the rest, should be human and approachable than that local authority members should have this personal touch. Would not members be better advised, while keeping their ears close to the ground, to concentrate their attention on policy, which is their proper sphere?

Redivision of London

We have no space here to examine in detail Sir Malcolm's case for a redivision of Greater London into six counties, a host of second-tier authorities, and a top-tier body with a few major powers. Two considerations only are mentioned because Sir Malcolm shows no appreciation of them. We must beware of breaking up efficient and humanely run organisations in pursuance of a principle that small things are always better. This is by no means universally true, any more than the converse that large-scale organisation is necessarily cheaper and more efficient. There is a discoverable optimum, and it may be that it has been found in some of the existing local government institutions even though they are large and seem "impersonal." The school child does not have daily contacts with the members of the education authority but with his teacher; what matters most is whether the child-parent-teacher relations are friendly and well-based, and this may be so in a large education area as easily as in a small.

Continued at foot of next page

It is the aim of "Local Government Service" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion within the Association. Unless the fact is stated, therefore, views advanced, whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles, should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.

Membership survey shows further big increase

THE ANNUAL survey of branch summary sheets for 1950 has now been completed. It reveals that NALGO'S official membership on October 31, the end of the Association's year, was 197,056—an increase of 7,795 since the 1949 count. When Conference assembles at Blackpool in June, therefore, it will represent more than half as many members again as when it last met there in 1945.

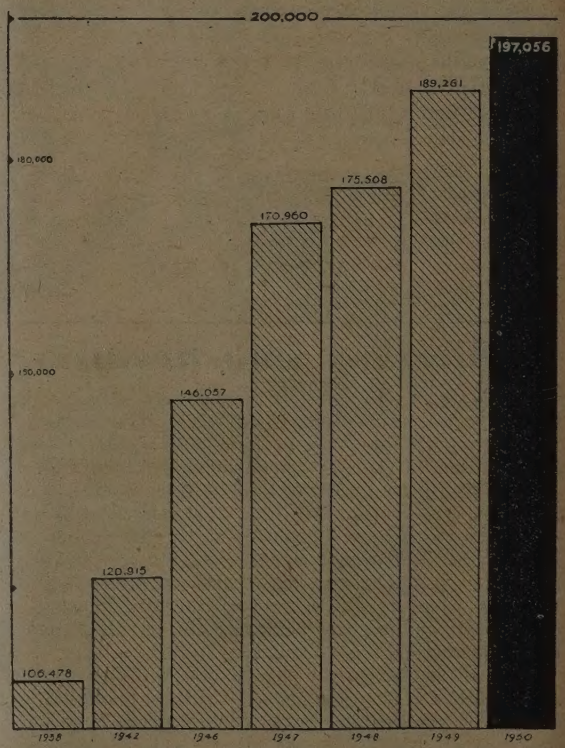
Thus NALGO retains its place as the eighth largest trade union in the country, and the biggest union of black-coated workers in the world. Moreover, the actual membership figure is even greater than the survey indicates, since members who are three months in arrear with their subscriptions, members of branches whose returns were submitted too late for the count, and members who have joined the Association since last October are not included.

This assumption is borne out by the circulation of "L.G.S.," which reaches 227,000 this month, and has been steadily rising throughout the year. Even discounting the margin which some branches draw for circulating to their councillors and the press and for recruitment purposes, this figure suggests that the actual membership has now passed the 200,000 we heralded last year.

This remarkable growth has not only further established NALGO'S right to its over-riding majority on the local government National Joint Council, but has, without doubt, increased its prestige in other spheres of public service from which its members are recruited. Nevertheless, its present and ever-increasing size has given rise to many problems; how, for example, to ensure that all members—spread as they are among five services, each with different employers, working standards, and negotiating machinery—are to be given equal voice in forming policy and the fullest share in negotiations.

With this in mind, the Eastbourne Conference discussed the National Executive Council's Report and Scheme on Adaptation of Association Machinery, which aimed to ensure the flexibility necessary to an active and growing organisation whilst preserving its unity. During the year the views then expressed have been seriously considered by the N.E.C., and it will be the responsibility of this year's Conference to determine the future shape of NALGO.

Dividing the membership into subscription scales, we find that at least 42·5 per cent of the members are earning less than £7 a week and only 25·7 per cent are earning more than £9—a picture much the same as we found in October, 1949. This is a far from satisfactory state of affairs—bearing in mind that the cost of living, as MR. DUDLEY SEERS deduces in his article on page 385, has continued its upward spiral—and one which can only be rectified by a satisfactory settlement of the present salaries claim.



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Secondly, there is something in the criticism that Sir Malcolm, having in his new utopia thrown the oversized London and Middlesex county councils out of the door, has to admit a (non-elected) Greater London Council in at the window. Here is another risk: that of making the organisation so elaborate that those who operate it spend too much time making contacts with the other branches, to the neglect of their true functions.

These comments on aspects of Sir Malcolm's plan are not intended to condemn it, for it should be warmly welcomed as a spur to the Government who alone can initiate the reforms so urgently needed. As the *Manchester Guardian* said in discussing Sir Malcolm's lecture, a reform of the structure of local government "alone can arrest and reverse the decline in this most precious of our political institutions towards mere survival as a picturesque anachronism."

One man's meat . . .

A survey conducted for the magazine *Future* by Social Surveys Ltd., provided some interesting facts about the problems and mentality of office workers.

Of the sample covered, 40 per cent. were women. Ages ranged from 15 to 50 plus, incomes from £5 to £20 a week. Industrial grouping was manufacture, 28 per cent; distribution, 21 per cent; civil service and local government, 16 per cent; insurance and banking, 10 per cent.

Asked whether they were drawing on savings for necessities, 23 per cent said yes and 18 per cent said they had no savings. 37 per cent would feel inclined to put their children into the same line of business as themselves; 42 per cent would not. Those who favoured trade unionism for office workers numbered 43 per cent; and 21 per cent were against it, whilst of the civil and local government service group 65 per cent favoured it.

An analysis of the result by salary groups shows that the highest proportion of those who are drawing on savings is in the middle group (£8-£10 a week).

The cost of living

by DUDLEY SEERS

THIS IS probably the most widely discussed of our current problems. Nothing, not even the danger of war, affects so many people so sharply, and its impact will certainly be more severe still in coming months. There are also more misconceptions about it than about almost anything else.

The first of these is that the " official index " is " cooked." The official index—the Interim Index of Retail Prices—is actually quite honest so far as it goes. The trouble is that this does not measure quite what we want to measure. What it does measure is the increased cost *since June, 1947*, of buying what *wage-earners* bought *before the war*. The three phrases in italics are the three snags.

We can get over the first snag by calculating what the Index would have measured if it had started in *1938*. (Anyone interested in how these and subsequent calculations are done can find a technical description by the author in the issue of the Bulletin of the Oxford Institute of Statistics for June, 1950.) The results are as follows :

Wage-earners' Cost of Living (1938=100)

1946	1947	1948	1949
151½	161½	175½	181½

1950					
Jan.	185	May	187	Sept.	187
Feb.	185	June	187	Oct.	188
Mar.	185	July	187	Nov.	190
April	187	Aug.	185	Dec.	190

These calculations do, however, rather show up the old " cost of living index," discontinued in 1947, which suggested that the rise in living costs since pre-war was only some 30 per cent by 1947, and whose construction (to put it politely) had peculiar features which invited official exploitation. But the new Index is open to less objection.

We can also go a good way towards getting over the second obstacle because the National Income White Paper contains calculations every year which show us how much the cost of what *the whole nation* buys has risen since pre-war. These calculations take us up to 1949, but we can bring them up to the autumn of 1950 with the help of information in section XV of the Monthly Digest of Statistics. Briefly, this tells us what personal expenditure on various commodities would have been in 1950 if 1948 prices had applied, and if we compare this with what it actually was, we can find out how much the Central Statistical Office thinks prices have risen since 1948. This gives us the following results :

Average Cost of Living for the whole nation (1938=100)

1946	1947	1948
162½	173	186½

1949		1950	
1st qtr.	188	1st qtr.	193
2nd „	191	2nd „	196
3rd „	191½	3rd „	195
4th „	189½		

Broadly speaking, the conclusion is that *on average*, allowing for controlled rents and subsidised foods on the one hand, and for beer and tobacco on the other, prices have about doubled since 1938. This is much more relevant for middle-class organisations than is the wage-earners' index, because the middle-classes lay out their money in a rather different way from wage-earners (a smaller proportion tending to go on food and drink, for example, and a larger proportion on clothing and travel). On the whole, the things that the middle-class tend to spend their money on have gone up rather more than the things wage-earners spend their money on. The higher income groups tend to bear a heavy share of purchase taxes, while the lower groups tend to receive a large share of the benefits of food subsidies. The diagram on the next page, however, shows that in recent years the gap has been closing slightly—prices of necessities have been rising a little more sharply than prices of luxuries.

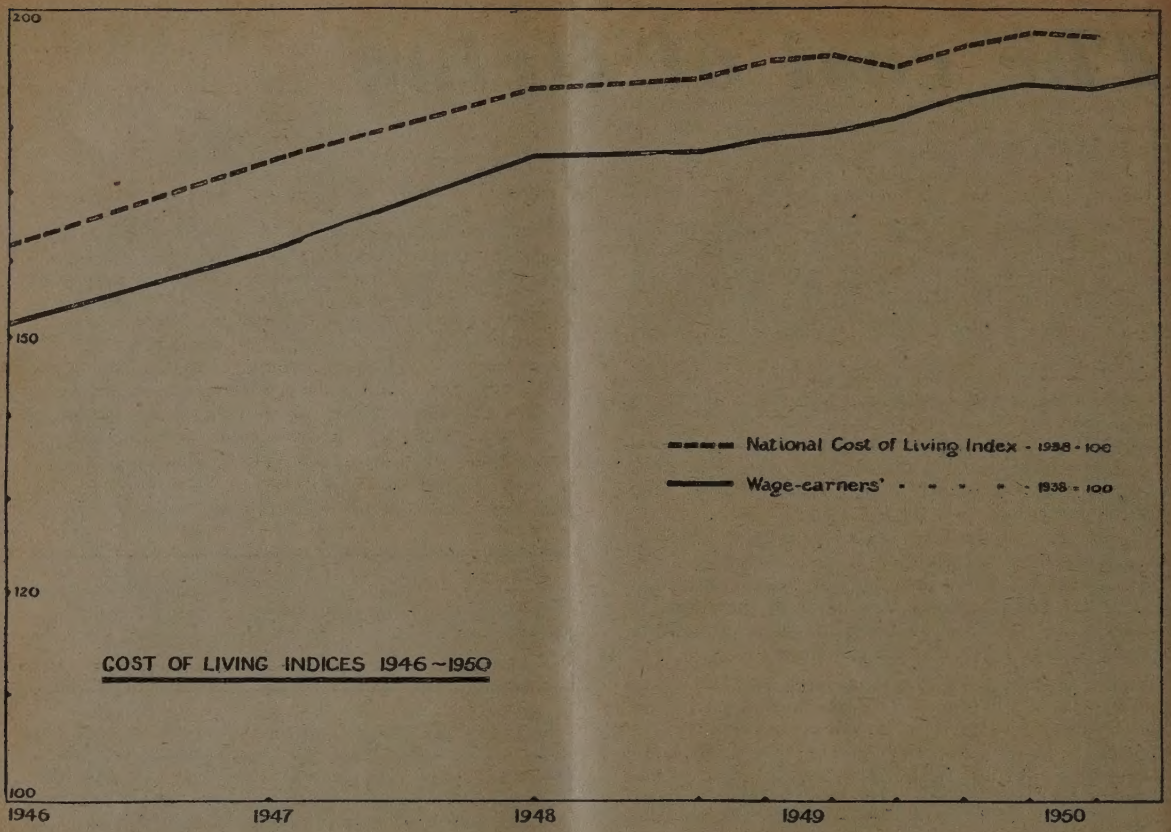
DUDLEY SEERS, Lecturer in Economic Statistics at Oxford University, was approached by " L.G.S." as an independent authority to give estimates of recent and possible future changes in the cost of living.

Contrary, perhaps, to general impression, a large part of the rise since 1938 is concentrated in the post-war period. The above table shows a price rise of 20 per cent from 1946 to the third quarter of 1950. Some rough calculations for 1945 suggest a figure of about 155 for that year. So that the national index was, in the autumn of last year, about 25 per cent above what it had been five years before, when the Japanese war ended. Something like one-third of the price rise since 1938 has in fact come in the post-war period. If we could allow for changes since the third quarter of 1950 we would, I think, find that the average price level now was nearer 30 per cent than 25 per cent above the level at the end of the last war.

Needless to say, these calculations take no account of taxes. People in the middle income ranges would actually need about two-and-a-quarter times their pre-war income to be able to afford the same living standard as pre-war.

Finally, we can now get over even the last hurdle to some extent and find the changes in the cost of buying the sort of things people are *now* buying. One can fairly complain that the official index (and the index I show above) is a little misleading because one cannot now buy all the things that were bought pre-war. The official index tells us, for example, how much the cost of the pre-war working-class diet has risen between 1947 and 1950, but one could not buy meat either in 1947 or in 1950 in the quantities wage-earners used to buy pre-war. Meat prices, therefore, play too big a part in the Index, when we are using it to measure recent changes in the cost of living. The Index responds too sharply to changes in meat prices. Coal is similarly " underweighted," while the Index is on the other hand not sensitive enough to price changes in electricity and entertainments. And some extras like coffee, ice cream, firewood and coach fares, which have been rather important in the post-war period, have been entirely left out.

On the whole I don't personally feel that these out-of-date



features have mattered very much since the Index started. I know that the popular impression is contrary, but the Index does seem to me to have been roughly true for wage-earners since 1947. Indeed, many of the foods which have risen most sharply are those " overweighted " in the Index. Neither must we forget that items like drink, tobacco, and rent have remained fairly steady since then, and that these account for a fair proportion of wage-earners' expenditure. Where it may have gone wrong, in the last few months, is in failing to take sufficient account of changes in textile prices. Certainly it is now unreliable as a guide to middle-class organisations because of the big part clothing plays in the budgets of their members.

With the aid of the new information in the Digest of Statistics, however, one can make up a rough index of the change in the cost of the national average *post-war* living standard. This is done by seeing how much more the average 1948 budget would cost at later dates. The results are as follows :*

Cost of Living for the whole nation (1948=100)

1949		1950	
1st qtr.	100½	1st qtr.	103½
2nd ,,	102½	2nd ,,	105
3rd ,,	102½	3rd ,,	104½
4th ,,	101½		

(The corresponding figure for 1938 would be 55.)

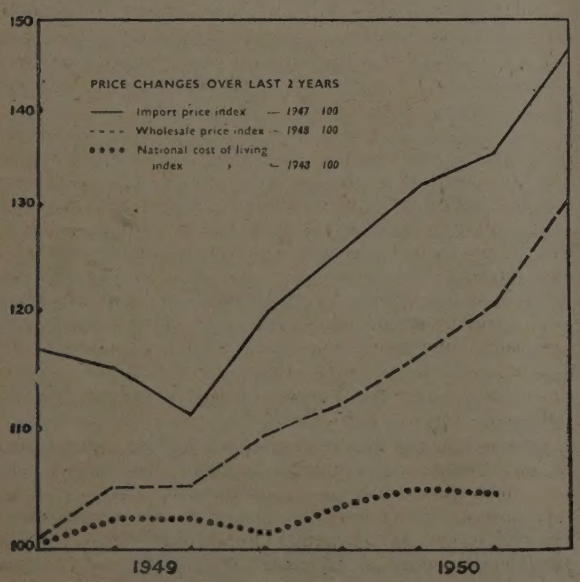
** Since this index has not been published elsewhere, I had better say (for the benefit of cost-of-living experts who may read this) that it is obtained by weighting the price relatives obtained from the Digest by consumer purchases in 1948 as shown in the National Income White Paper. It is therefore in principle 1948-weighted, but the individual price relatives are implicitly current-weighted and may differ slightly from the 1948-weighted ones we should like to have.*

The drop in the third quarter, which looks a little odd, is probably due to the fall in the prices of fresh fruit and vegetables in the summer. We cannot say what the figure for the last quarter of 1950 would be though, looking at the price information available, an estimate of 107 would not be far wrong. This Index seems to be the best one available as a guide for an organisation such as NALGO of how the cost of living has changed for its members in the recent past. It tells us that the rise up to the middle of last year from 1948 was about 5 per cent, before the Korean war really affected prices.

We should, of course, not forget that this is only an *average* change, and that the change for individuals may be very different. Those with cars, for example, have been specially affected by the price rise for petrol and tyres. And none of these calculations take account of the extent to which people have recently been forced to buy expensive substitutes. Here again, the main case is that of meat. People who have been forced to buy rabbit in place of beef or mutton in recent weeks, have suffered a rise in the cost of maintaining their living standard, and I for one shall not be satisfied with the new cost of living index the Government has promised to provide unless it allows for the effect of such " enforced substitution."

We cannot say much either about the most recent price rises. One wonders why some newspapers which raise so much fuss about the cost of living, do not go to the trouble of compiling a cost of living index showing readers what is currently happening. The technical problems would not be insuperable, and it would allow

conclusions about the current cost of living to be based on evidence instead of guess work. Even if no further price rises occur, those already announced will have a considerable effect. Changes in wage-rates notified to the Ministry of Labour during 1950 added over £100,000,000 to the national wage bill, mostly in the last few months of the year (about twice the 1949 amount), and the import price rise after the middle of the year added some 15 per cent in six months to the prices of our imports, or some £300,000,000. To these we must add extra profits that are automatically added on top of cost increases under " full cost " accounting systems, and we might not be very wrong if we said that the effect of changes in the latter half of 1950 were such as to add some £600-£700 millions, or 7 to 8 per cent, to the cost of living, most of which is still to come. However, we must also take into account the effect of recent coal price rises, which add some £40,000,000 a year to the total prices paid by the British public; of increased dockers' wages; and of higher meat prices. The total effect of economic changes up to the time of writing (early February) might be to have added around 10 per cent over mid-1950 prices by the time these rises have worked their way right through to the purchaser. The diagram of recent price changes shows how little retail prices have yet responded to the change in import prices, which have, in fact, not yet fully affected wholesale prices. These high prices will in themselves generate demands for higher incomes, and thus further price rises. In addition, the pressure on raw materials does not look like slackening, and we can hardly hope to escape higher indirect taxes in the Budget. How much all these changes will affect the cost of living is very hard to say. It depends on so many factors, such as whether price controls will be tightened, how much civilian output is checked by the arms programme, and how long arbitrators take to decide on wage claims. So prediction is rash. I shall, however, personally be surprised if the Interim Index of Retail Prices stood below 130 next December (compared with 116 last December) and, if asked for a guess, I would pick on 135, or a 15 per cent rise, during the year. But at root it really all depends on what diplomatic decisions are taken in Washington and Moscow, because these decisions will determine the burden of rearmament carried by the economies of the West.



ANSWER TO APATHY

Last month's article under this heading has prompted Islington branch to tell the story of its daily wall-newspaper:

THREE MONTHS OR SO ago, we considered this question of apathy and decided that the only way to overcome it was to keep the ordinary members of the branch fully informed of NALGO activities. But how? Notice boards, we thought, tended to become neglected, and magazines could never be quite up-to-date, so we decided to experiment with a daily wall-newspaper. If it was to be successful, however, we should need full co-operation, so the first number was designed to attract attention, and consisted of a picture, an announcement of the birth of the newspaper, and an invitation to all to contribute.

After a few weeks there were so many offers of help that we were able to allocate the jobs among a team of enthusiasts. Now there are individual members, each with a deputy, responsible for editing, artistic composition, receiving material, circulation, organising features, accounts, exchange and mart, correspondence, and competitions—one of which gave us our name, "Islingtonic."

The items are gummed in irregular pattern on a sheet of stiff brown paper. Paper of different colour is used for each main subject—comment, service conditions news, social events, and sports—which brightens the whole appearance and makes for easier reference.

Each day a newspaper is pinned on the special board in the canteen, and as it is replaced it is sent round the departments outside the town hall, remaining in each for one day. Some departments, of course, get the "daily" as much as a week late, so we produce in addition a weekly duplicated newsheet of urgent news, dates of committee meetings, internal advertisements, and the like.

Our members now know more than ever before about NALGO, and attendance at branch meetings more than doubled by the time the fiftieth issue of "Islingtonic" had appeared. A daily wall-newspaper is an excellent way of increasing interest in the Association, and if any branch officers care to write to us c/o the editor, "Islingtonic," Town Hall, Islington, London, N.1, we shall be happy to pass on hints, or perhaps visit them.

Discussion and compromise

This is the essence of Whitleyism, the system of collective bargaining to which NALGO subscribes. Members who do not know how the system evolved, or what it means, should read this article

by J. E. N. DAVIS*

IN 1916 the Government set up a committee, under the chairmanship of J. H. WHITLEY, M.P., later Speaker of the House of Commons, to make and consider suggestions for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and workmen, and to recommend a system whereby industrial conditions could be reviewed by those concerned, with the object of improving them.

As a result of that committee's work, there are today more than two hundred national joint councils functioning in Britain, and the principle of collective bargaining is almost generally accepted throughout commerce, industry, and the public services.

Briefly, the committee's recommendations were: the formation in well-organised industries of joint industrial councils; the appointment of works committees representative of the management and workers in individual establishments; statutory regulation of wages in badly organised trades; a permanent Court of Arbitration; and the holding of inquiries into disputes by the Minister of Labour. Despite the last three recommendations, however, the committee advocated that industries should, as far as possible, make their own agreements and settle their own differences.

It was not at first appreciated that the Whitley Report applied to the public service, but the committee made it clear in its second report that the expression "employers and workmen" covered state and municipal authorities and their employees.

First council a failure

Thus, in 1920, a local government National Whitley Council was formed. The associations of local authorities were represented, and a national scale of salaries was issued. But the council was born out of its due time: local authorities were not then prepared to give up the fixing of their own standards, and the scales were almost generally ignored. The County Councils' Association quickly withdrew, and the Association of Municipal Corporations refused to remain unless the agreed salary scales were withdrawn. The Council collapsed in 1921, but in its short life it had formed a number of provincial councils, and three of these—the Metropolitan, Lancashire and Cheshire, and Yorkshire—continued to function as provincial bodies. These councils issued recommended salary scales, maintained contact with each other, and did much to pave the way for the formation, in 1944, of the existing National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Administrative, Professional, Technical and Clerical Services.

This is a voluntary body, based on the support of the five associations of local authorities and local authorities who are also members of the fifteen provincial councils. Since its formation, of course, certain services have been nationalised, and the Acts of Parliament which created the nationalised undertakings ruled that negotiating machinery should be established and maintained and also provided for reference to arbitration where necessary.

Trade disputes : Minister's rôle

No such provision for arbitration is made in the constitutions of the local government N.J.C. or of the corresponding body in Scotland, but the staff sides can resort to arbitration under the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Orders, 1940-1944. The object of these Orders is to prevent strikes and lock-outs—which are illegal unless due notice has been given and the Minister of Labour has not taken action to bring about a settlement—and to set up compulsory arbitration. Any trade dispute[1] may be reported to the Minister of Labour, who may take whatever action he considers appropriate.

He may refer the matter to an appropriate body either to promote a settlement or to determine the dispute, or he may refer it to the National Arbitration Tribunal.

Any decision on a dispute referred to it for determination by, say, the N.J.C. or the N.A.T. is legally binding on both employer and employed. Further, under Part V of the Order, any terms and conditions of employment that are established and have been agreed by a joint council like the N.J.C. must be observed by all employers unless they are observing equally good or better terms and conditions; and failure to observe recognised terms and conditions may be reported to the Minister by a trade union within twelve months of the day on which the question first arose, whereupon the Minister must take action as though it were a trade dispute.

Where Whitleyism applies under Act of Parliament, as it does in the nationalised gas, electricity, and transport services, there is no difficulty about the observance of awards. But in a service like the local government service, where in England and Wales there are more than 1,500 local authorities, the issue is not simple. A few authorities still depart from some decisions of the N.J.C. in such a way that it is difficult to say that the altered conditions are less satisfactory than the Whitley conditions. Many observe the conditions because they recognise the ultimate compulsion of the Orders. Undoubtedly, without the Orders we

** Mr. Davis is the Association's chief organisation officer, a member of seven joint negotiating bodies, staff side secretary of the N.J.C. for gas staffs, and was first staff side secretary of the Electricity N.J.C. (Administrative and Clerical Grades).*

[1] *"Trade dispute" means any difference between employers and workmen, or between workmen and workmen connected with the employment or non-employment, or the terms of the employment or with the conditions of labour, of any person.*

might quickly find such authorities refusing to observe awards, and with nothing but moral suasion to our hand the system of collective bargaining, as we know it today, might all too soon be imperilled.

Yet, any day the Orders may go. They were originally issued after consultation between the Government and the National Advisory Council—representatives of the Confederation of Employers and the T.U.C.—and a pledge was given that the Orders would be withdrawn at any time at the request of Congress. Some of the more militant trade unions, who complain that the Order hampers them because it outlaws the strike weapon, have pressed for its withdrawal. Many local authorities, too, strongly resent the Orders. Soon after the issue of the 1940 Order, the associations of local authorities jointly obtained and circulated an opinion of leading Counsel that the Order did not apply to local authorities and the Association had to take a test case—the Bolton judgment—to the House of Lords before the issue was resolved.

In 1945, NALGO was concerned with three national joint councils—the one for local authorities in England and Wales, its counterpart in Scotland, and the Rushcliffe Committee for nurses. Now, it is represented on no fewer than eighteen. On these it holds eighty seats, while on the various provincial and district councils it holds more than five hundred.

How do these councils work ? Well, the objects of them all, though differently expressed, are the same : to settle by negotiation terms and conditions of employment, and make recommendations for schemes of education and training, and measures relating to efficiency, welfare, and so on. The set-up in general is also the same : two sides—employer and employee—with a chairman from one side and a vice-chairman from the other (unless, as is the case on the local government N.J.C., there is an independent chairman), and joint secretaries. Nothing is agreed unless there is a majority on each side of the joint council. Obviously, the procedure must be proposal, exposition, persuasion, compromise. Since compromise is mutual concession, the struggle is who is to concede most. Invariably the represented—whether employer or employee—tends to think that his representatives have managed to do just that !

" Give-and-take atmosphere "

In my experience, a successful Whitley council is not one where long and animated debates are the order of the day. Indeed, meetings of councils, especially councils where results are being obtained, tend to appear formal, lifeless, and short. Salary scales and detailed schemes of conditions of service are unlikely to be negotiated in large meetings with formal speeches, or as a result of bitter debates. They are dealt with in executive committees or sub-committees in an informal and give-and-take atmosphere. Staff representatives do not go to meetings to tell the local authority representatives what they think of them, but to remove anomalies, relieve injustices, and secure improvements. It is as well to start off on the assumption that the other side is prepared to listen to a reasoned case, and that if such a case is stated—for preference understated rather than overstated—agreement will be reached. It is also as well to recognise that the other side is not much different from the local City Fathers—it sees no reason why improved conditions should be conceded unless there is a strong case.

Representatives on Whitley councils should be representatives, not delegates. The Association rightly lays down policy, but detailed proposals and rigid formulae should not be thrust upon them. The whole conception of Whitleyism is discussion and compromise. If both sides are bound in advance, discussion is a waste of time. In the words of Burke, " What sort of reason is that in which the determination precedes the discussion ; in which one set of men deliberate and another decide ; and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the arguments ? "

Appeals provisions problematical

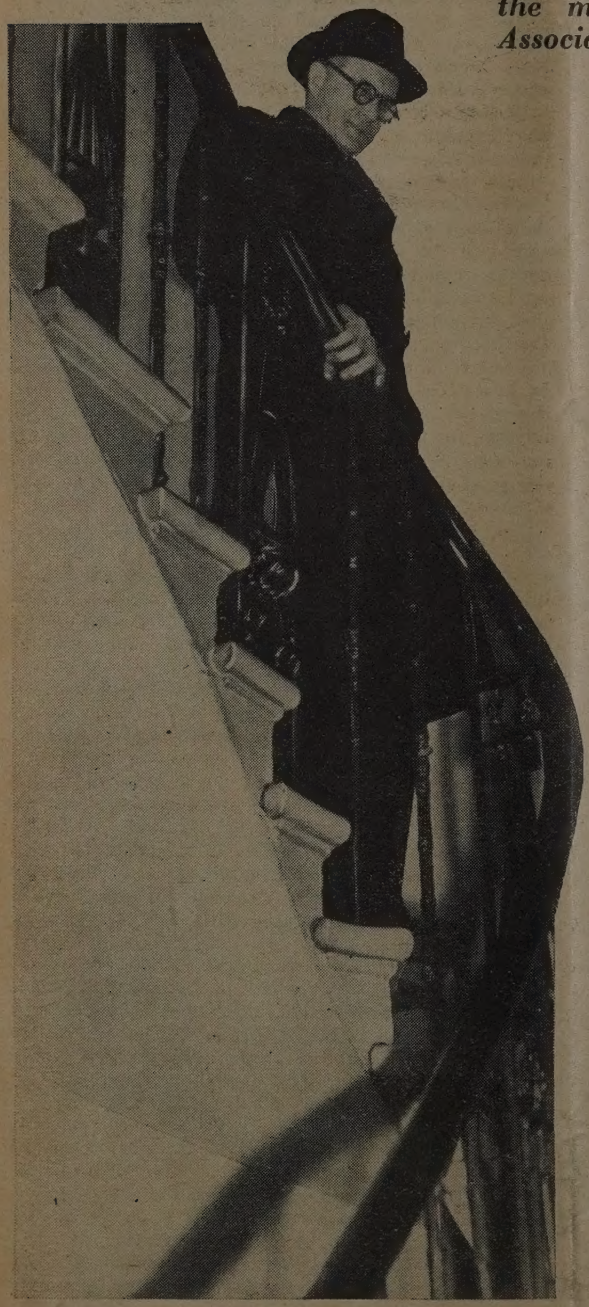
All the Whitley council constitutions contain appeals provisions, and these raise several difficult questions. How far should the individual employee be entitled to appeal ? If his right is absolute, the machine may be choked by frivolous or unjustified appeals, for men tend not to be good judges in their own cause. If there are no time limits, the result of successful appeals may lead to more and more appeals until nearly everybody appeals on the basis that "as I can lose nothing I might as well try my luck." Something like that was threatened before the time limits were agreed in the local government N.J.C. Moreover, bad appeals prejudice good ones. My personal view—and I want to emphasise that it is a personal view—is that the time limitation on appeals is undesirable, but that the absolute right of the individual to appeal should go ; that any individual appeal should be heard only if it is sponsored by a trade union represented on the joint council ; and that the trade unions should have the courage to put forward only those appeals that have merit. A snag that has been experienced in local authority appeals is that while the appellant has "had it" when his appeal is lost, the employer, by the expedient of not accepting the award, can, in effect, force a second hearing of the case. And then, since action is possible only under the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Orders, the Association is compelled to report a trade dispute. This position is worsened if—as has happened—the N.J.C. does not uphold the award of the provincial appeals committee but substitutes a different grading.

There are two main criticisms of Whitleyism : first, that compromise involves acceptance of standards worse than might be conceded by the best employer—though they may be better than the average ; and, second, that the machine works slowly. It is true that we rarely secure our hearts' desires, but I am sure that any impartial examination of what has been done, whether in the local authority field or in any of the nationalised services, since the machinery has existed, will show that, taking the services as a whole, there are substantial gains which would not have been secured otherwise. And this in a difficult period. As to the alleged slowness of the machine—and the criticism is heard wherever a Whitley council exists—I venture the opinion that there is much exaggeration. In any case, hasty and ill-considered decisions are to be avoided like the plague. Were decisions reached so quickly before Whitleyism ? That was not my experience. Much of the criticism arises in my view from an inappreciation of the difficulties that confront staff side negotiators. The case that sounds so clear and convincing in the branch meeting may not sound so clear or convincing when the employers have criticised it. Or it may be that the all too frequent facile assumption that Whitleyism would at once bring a new heaven and earth has led to disappointed hopes. Even so, the words of Sir William Douglas, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, are true—"Nowhere, in recent years, has the influence of collective bargaining been greater than in the field of local government."

HEADQUARTERS AT WORK—1.

The Central Secretariat

This necessarily brief sketch of the work of the General Secretary's department is the first in a series of articles designed to take the member "behind the scenes" at the Association's headquarters.



IT IS NALGO'S proud tradition that the bulk of its work is done, and its policies determined, by its own membership, and it cannot be too often emphasised that the health and strength of the Association lie in the enthusiasm of hundreds of its ordinary members who devote their leisure time to its service.

On this spirit of voluntary service it will continue to rely. Inevitably, however, an Association catering for 200,000 members, and which engages on their behalf not only in trade unionism but in a range of welfare activities unequalled in any other similar organisation, must employ a fairly large staff of paid officers. In fact, NALGO employs a total staff of 280, of which 63 work in the twelve district offices throughout England, Wales, and Scotland, and the remainder at the London Headquarters.

At the hub, advising, interpreting, and co-ordinating, and ultimately responsible for the whole administration, is the General Secretary, J. H. WARREN, M.A., D.P.A., Solicitor. On his appointment in 1945, he brought to the Association more than thirty years' experience of local government, the law, and some other sectors of public life; a wide experience in adult education; and a long unbroken period of service to NALGO as an honorary branch officer and member of the National Executive Council.

We have mentioned our tradition of voluntary service. It is because of this that the General Secretary of NALGO, unlike the chief officers of many other large trade unions, is not continually in the headlines, or involved in discussions of policy at Conference. He does not control policy and if he advises on it his advice is tendered to the N.E.C.

Behind the scenes, however, he represents the Association on councils, committees, and panels. Undoubtedly the most important of these, so far as the majority of the membership is concerned, is the local government National Joint Council, of which he is staff side secretary. Mr. Davis describes for us in his article on Whitleyism in this number how the Council works. But the job is not complete when the Council goes home: many hours of thought and labour remain for the joint secretaries.

On this score, it is interesting to note that Mr. Warren and E. W. BISHOP, the employers' secretary, have long been associated in Whitleyism. Both were present at a Conference of Lancashire and Cheshire authorities, called by the Town Clerk of Manchester in 1919 to discuss the possibility of setting up a Whitley machine in local government. Mr. Bishop, who was then on the town clerk's staff, was assigned the duties connected with the project, and Mr. Warren, then a young committee clerk, was part of the Birkenhead delegation.

Notable among the other bodies on which the General

The General Secretary discusses questions of policy with E. L. RILEY, *the President . . .*

. . . and N.J.C. decisions with E. W. BISHOP, *the Employers' secretary.*

Secretary serves are the Electricity Supply Industry N.J.C. (Administrative and Clerical), of which he is vice-chairman and chairman of the staff side; the Chief Officers' Negotiating Committee; the Local Government Examinations Board; the Trades Union Congress Local Government Advisory Committee; and the Joint University Council for social and administrative studies. In addition, because of NALGO'S prestige overseas, he is called upon to represent it on the International Union of Local Authorities, and sits in a personal capacity on the Colonial Secretary's Local Government Advisory Panel. Last year, the Swedish association of local government officers invited him to visit and address them, and he was able to arrange for a NALGO summer school in that country and to study certain developments in co-operative effort by black-coated organisations. In 1949, he went, at the request of the Foreign Office, to Western Germany, where his lectures on local government, trade unionism, and NALGO were widely distributed.

As chief adviser to the N.E.C. and its committees, the General Secretary is responsible for preparing statements as a basis for discussion, and reports reflecting the Council's conclusions. Members will recall, in particular, the comprehensive report on affiliation to the T.U.C., and the current one on Adaptation of Association Machinery. Although the work of the ancillaries, i.e., the Building Society, Logomia, and the Provident Society, is largely carried on by their specialist officers, the General Secretary is their Secretary also and is necessarily concerned with their administration and with the more general issues of policy that arise—particularly those affecting relationships with the parent Association.

These multifarious duties do not allow him much time for travelling round the country, but he endeavours to visit a number of branches, districts, and summer schools each year to keep as close personal contact as possible with the honorary officers and rank-and-file membership.

Helping him throughout are his deputy, W. C. ANDERSON, his administrative assistant, MISS W. HAMILTON, and a staff of three clerks and typists. This central secretariat, small in number, performs heavy tasks. It conducts every dispatch to the Association's 1,200 branches; convenes the meetings of the N.E.C. and committees; deals with day-to-day staff matters; oversees the maintenance of the Association's properties; supervises administration of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund; and organises Conference. The latter, it is perhaps not generally realised, takes nine months of the year to do, involving preparation of lists of delegates and of the agenda, preliminary and final; publication of the Annual Report; inspection of premises; arrangement of hotel accommodation for the N.E.C.; and constant liaison with the responsible branch to ensure smooth running of the event.

Co-ordinating the administration (l. to r.): *Lewis Bentley, Building Society solicitor; Miss Hamilton; Mr. Anderson; Alec Spoor, public relations officer; K. S. Carter, education officer; Mr. Warren; T. Hales, legal officer; J. E. Jenkins, financial officer; J. E. N. Davis, chief organisation officer; and Miss H. Newman, insurance officer.*

Living and learning

An interesting experiment in further education by a group of northern local authorities is being carried out in a country house in Wirral.

by A. M. BROWN *

IT IS AN encouraging fact that, since the publication of the Charter, local authorities have become increasingly aware of the value of post-entry training for their staff, and of the need to improve facilities for further education generally. In this welcome development, the residential college has an important part to play.

Burton Manor, for example, was established three years ago by the Birkenhead, Bootle, Cheshire, Lancashire, Liverpool, and Wallasey councils, in conjunction with Liverpool University, to provide short residential courses in a variety of both vocational and non-vocational subjects. Since then, more than six thousand men and women have attended courses varying from a week-end to a fortnight.

The courses fall into three main groups: general cultural courses in literature, drama, art, music, the countryside and history; courses on social and economic problems and on current affairs; and semi-vocational courses for men and women in industry, commerce, the professions, and the Forces on such subjects as supervisory management, the shipping industry, and local government. In general, the aim of all semi-vocational courses is to get the student to see his job, and perhaps his industry or profession, in proper perspective, and to give him the opportunity for revision, or "taking stock," in a world of many cares and distractions. No one suffers more from this pressure of work than the local government officer, and for this reason it seemed to me that there was a real need for residential courses to help him in his efforts to improve his qualifications and range of experience and thus to raise the standard of the service as a whole. Burton Manor alone cannot meet the need, for although we welcome students from all parts, it is primarily a regional college. But there are similar colleges in other areas, and I hope that this account of our experiment will stimulate interest elsewhere.

Varied community

Part of the attraction of Burton Manor lies in its policy of holding two or three contrasting courses simultaneously. Students attending a course on management, for instance, may meet others on a teachers' refresher course, or a course on the appreciation of music, and this ensures a varied community for the social life of the college and helps to break down occupational barriers.

There are two kinds of special courses designed for local government officers: a general course on the whole range of local government, and specialised courses on some of the separate services.

The general course, designed primarily for younger officers, covers the historical development of local government, the machinery of councils and committees, and the duties of the officers. Chief officers from the six authorities sponsoring the college lecture on the various departments, thus affording students the opportunity of meeting the experts face to face and questioning them. Incidentally, I have never yet been refused help by a chief officer on one of these courses, which says much for our "esprit de corps." In addition to talks and discussions, students form syndicates to consider major problems, and, on the last day, report their findings to the whole class. We have now run a number of these general courses, and will be organising two more this year, from April 23–28, and from October 28 to November 2.

Specialised courses

In the specialised courses, we have so far experimented in three directions: education, librarianship, and municipal finance. In all these we have had the advantage of the advice and practical help of specialists—without which, indeed, some of the courses could not have been held at all.

For the course on education, in addition to talks by experts in the field of schools inspection, finance, school meals, and other aspects of education administration, we had speakers from the Ministry of Education and from voluntary bodies.

The refresher courses in librarianship began as week-end schools. They have now become one-week courses, and look like developing into an annual event. This year, the course will be held from March 27 to April 1, and will cover book selection, public libraries, assistance to readers, children's libraries, publicity, reference work, university libraries, and other appropriate topics.

Our experiment in municipal finance courses also began with week-end programmes, organised by the Liverpool section of the Institute of Municipal Treasurers and Accountants. But the need to extend the courses to one week soon became clear, and the first of these was held last November. It was so successful that a similar course has been planned for June 3–8 this year, and I hope there will be another from November 11–16.

The highly technical nature of this course, which includes book-keeping principles, timekeeping records and preparation of pay rolls, store control, levy and collection of rates, costing principles, financial control, audit principles, superannuation, and education finance, makes it hard going, but judicious planning lessens the strain, and I am sure the students have found it worth while.

What place have such intensive courses in our training schemes? And why make them residential? Well, first of all, for many students in country areas they provide the most convenient means of supplementing classes or correspondence courses. Secondly, through such courses the benefit of the knowledge and experience of a large number of experts can be spread to many local authorities. Thirdly, the courses are residential because there is much more to them than a series of lectures. They are also a rich social experience and, I am sure, have a vital part to play in the continuous improvement of the local government service.

* *Dr. Andrew M. Brown, M.A., a former deputy director of education, is warden of Burton Manor, Wirral, Cheshire.*

Service conditions news

LOCAL GOVERNMENT by J. C. HAMILTON

N.E.C. votes on major issue on Whitleyism

SOME MONTHS AGO, the Middlesex County Council decided to withdraw from the Whitley machine. The reason put forward was that the decisions of the National Joint Council and the constitution of the Middlesex Provincial Council were not appropriate to the peculiar circumstances of the county council and its staff, and it was intended that all salaries and service conditions should then be determined through the medium of the local joint committee. At the time, in the light of the information before them, a number of the county council's staff thought that this agreement would give them certain advantages and accordingly the local branch of NALGO was at that stage inclined to agree with the proposal.

A fifth provincial council

Subsequently, in an effort to meet the situation, the employers' side of the National Joint Council made certain proposals, including the setting up of a fifth provincial council in the London area, of which Middlesex County Council would be the first constituent member. The proposals met with the approval of the county council.

The service conditions committee of the National Executive Council was also prepared to approve these proposals, subject to the establishment of the fifth provincial council being regarded as a purely temporary and transitional arrangement; to the constitution of the new body following the same lines as the other provincial councils; to an approach being made to the London County Council to participate in the newly-formed body; to the provincial councils in the London area being informed of the proposal and steps being taken to bring them into consultation and active support of the ultimate objective; and to the situation being reviewed in twelve months' time.

When this decision came to the N.E.C. for approval, however, an amendment was moved that the matter should be referred back to the committee because the Metropolitan District Committee disapproved of and opposed the setting up of a fifth provincial council in the Metropolitan area and desired to take other action.

The council regarded the matter as a major issue, and voting was as follows:

For the amendment: Messrs. A. H. Aubertin, H. Bewes, N. W. Bingham, T. D. Bradford, G. B. Credland, S. Duncan, J. W. Edmonds, J. Y. Fawcett, A. E. Fitton, P. H. Harrold, L. W. G. Hetherington, N. Hurd, L. G. Lambe, J. B. McCann, H. Mather, C. J. Newman, T. Nolan, A. E. Odell, L. Palmer, J. Penny, J. P. Phoenix, L. G. Sirett, A. Smith, T. Stewart, W. Strother, Miss M. Townson, Messrs. R. B. Webb, W. J. Wynn, E. Young. (29.)

Against the amendment: Messrs. W. F. Appleton, E. F. Bacon, A. Batley, O. Baxter, G. T. Belton, L. Bevan, S. H. Brodie, E. C. R. Chinn, F. C. Corbishley, Miss M. W. Curtin, Messrs. V. A. Day, A. A. Dumbrell, C. B. Evans, R. Evans, A. Gallon, J. G. Iles, H. R. Jones, G. Llewelyn, A. E. Nortrop, A. J. Packer, Miss F. E. Pole, Messrs. J. C. Rennie, H. N. Schrader, C. A. Smallman, L. H. Taylor, E. A. S. Young. (26.)

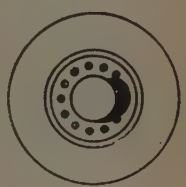
Mr. N. McLean abstained from voting.

The question has now been referred to the executive committee of the National Joint Council for examination and report.

Motor car allowances

A revision of the existing scheme is being actively considered. It will be appreciated that there are many different factors to be taken into account in considering a scheme which will have to be nationally applied and where there is a keen divergence of view. Consequently, when this matter was last considered by the National Joint Council on February 7, it was not possible to reach any final conclusions. Both employers' and staff representatives are, however, well aware of the urgency of the problem.

TRANSPORT



Agreements for road passenger staff nearing completion

MR. LANCASTER'S many friends will be pleased to know that, whilst at the time of writing he is still in hospital, he is making progress towards recovery.

Road passenger staff

Negotiations are proceeding with a number of road passenger undertakings. Progress with some is not so fast as we might wish, but several agreements are being discussed. It can confidently be said that some will be completed very soon, probably before these notes appear.

Road haulage staff

We have been asked to record the following resolution which was passed at a recent meeting of the Bouts-Tillotson (London) branch:

"That this meeting is unanimously resolved to support NALGO in an all-out effort for recognition."

We are sorry that nothing further can yet be reported about this particular service. The matter is, however, still receiving the very close attention of the National Executive Council and certain action is being taken.

Waterways staff

Consideration is now being given to the position of staff employed by the Docks and Inland Waterways Executive who have salaries exceeding £630—the present "ceiling" of the existing National Joint Council. So far as the waterways section is concerned, the bulk of these employees are in NALGO, and efforts are being made to ensure that their salaries and conditions of service can be dealt with through appropriate machinery without further delay.

By agreement between the four trade unions represented on the National Joint Council for Salaried Staff of Waterways Divisions, a claim for "a substantial increase" in the salary scales embodied in the existing agreements has been submitted to the Docks and Inland Waterways Executive.

An early meeting of the Council has been requested to deal with the matter, and it is intended that the amount and basis of the increase shall be a matter for negotiation.

ELECTRICITY by L. G. MOSER

Limited scheme for retention of pensionable staff agreed

THE HIGHLIGHT of the January meeting of the National Joint Advisory Council was the reception of the second report and statement of accounts of the British Electricity Authority. The Council was indebted to the chief officers of the Authority, each of whom made excellent statements introducing their sections, and to SIR HENRY SELF and SIR JOHN HACKING, the deputy chairmen of the Authority, who answered questions. The submission of these reports to the Council gives the trade unions a full opportunity of seeking information and expressing their views on the progress of the industry. I hope that, as time goes on, we shall make even fuller use of the opportunity.

Reports were also given by the leaders of the two teams which visited America under the auspices of the Anglo-American Council on Productivity.

It is now felt that the advisory machinery has been operating long enough to review the way it is working. Undoubtedly the machinery has already served many useful purposes, but it is not yet achieving all it might. Branches have been asked to submit suggestions for improving its effectiveness, and it is hoped that, as a result of the investigations, we shall remove some of the weaknesses which have quite naturally revealed themselves in this machinery, which in many ways is quite new.

More co-operation wanted

In February, 1949, I had the privilege of addressing a conference of power station superintendents at Buxton. During my talk I said, "There is still a tendency in some districts to follow the old "hush-hush" policy. Nationalisation must inevitably bring with it some re-organisation. . . . If the full co-operation of the staff is to be secured, executive officers must be prepared to take them into their confidence, and to let them know what is happening." Unfortunately, what I said then is still true in many districts. I think that the boards' members of district advisory councils and local advisory committees could make much more use of these bodies to keep staff informed and to discuss many matters which may, in the last resort, be matters for management, but which are no less questions on which the views of the staff should be known and seriously considered.

Retention of pensionable staff

In view of the present manpower shortage, the Government is anxious that people should not necessarily cease working at the retiring age provided by their pension scheme. NALGO is, of course, concerned that a policy of delayed retirements should not be generally followed, since it would affect the promotion opportunities of younger employees. It is recognised, however, that in present circumstances some flexibility is necessary, particularly where it is desirable to retain an employee for a reasonable time because he has some particular knowledge or experience. The following procedure has been agreed :

1. Normally an employee shall retire at age 65 (in the case of women at age 60). He can, however, be retained after his normal retirement date if a shortage of manpower makes it necessary.

2. Retention will be for periods of 12 months and subject to annual review, and will be at the discretion of an electricity board, but trade unions may refer to the negotiating machinery cases where they think employees are being unfairly treated.

3. An employee retained shall have the option either (1) to be formally retired at normal pension date and be re-engaged, in which case pension will be paid from the normal pension date ; or (2) to continue to contribute to his superannuation scheme if the scheme so permits.

This procedure enables NALGO, through the negotiating machinery, to ensure that employees are not retained unnecessarily, and also gives a fair deal to those who, by mutual agreement, continue to give their services to the industry beyond the age when they could normally look forward to a well-earned rest.

Insurance against attack

The National Joint Council has considered the position of employees in the industry whose duties are such that they are particularly liable to suffer loss, damage or injury as a result of personal attack during the course of their duties, and also of those who may be involved in accidents whilst travelling in boards' vehicles. NALGO suggested that the boards should provide an insurance policy to cover these contingencies. The boards' members, however, took the view that the insurance of employees was a policy matter for them to decide, but they have given assurances—acceptable to the staff side—that boards would take a sympathetic view of cases as they arose and would consider not only their legal but their moral obligations. It will, of course, be open for NALGO to discuss with the board any case where a member or his dependants appear not to be fairly treated.

HEALTH by G. W. PHILLIPS

Increase and two years' back pay for mental health staff

THE Nurses and Midwives Council recently completed a further stage in the revision of nurses' salaries with the issue of H.M.C. Circular No. 10 dealing with the salaries of senior grades in mental hospitals and mental deficiency institutions. The grades range from night sister (or male night charge-nurse) working under a night superintendent to matron and chief male nurse in a training school. The agreement represents an all-round improvement in the salaries of the staffs concerned, and is to be applied retrospectively from February 1, 1949. Copies have been sent to all branches having health service members.

Radiographers' salaries

Another agreement providing for increases in salaries of radiographers has been reached by the Professional and Technical Staffs "A" Council. Details are not yet available, but a Whitley Council document is expected soon after these notes appear. These increases will be followed by improved salaries for the other professional groups covered by the Council, whose salary scales were formerly settled by the Joint Negotiating Committee (Hospital Staffs). Negotiations affecting physicists, biochemists and psychologists are now in progress.

Salaries claim

At a recent staff side meeting of the Professional and Technical Staffs' "B" Council, the Association's proposal for an all-round increase in salaries was remitted to the standing committees to consider what action should be taken on behalf of the staff for which they are responsible. Early meetings of the committees have been arranged.

This Council is now considering the pay and conditions of service of clerks of works, engineers in local authority institutions and teaching hospitals, and dispensing assistants with supervisory duties.

Administrative and Clerical Staff

A meeting of the Administrative and Clerical Staffs' Council is to be held on March 16

GAS SERVICE by L. A. GARRATT

Interests of co-partners safeguarded by new agreement

SINCE co-partnership schemes continued by the Gas (Co-Partnership) Regulations 1949 will terminate on March 31, the Gas Council, on February 9, made arrangements with the employees' sides of the National Joint Council for Gas Staffs and the National Joint Industrial Council for the Gas Industry, the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, and the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers (which have been recognised by it as being appropriate for the purposes of Section 57 of the Gas Act 1948) on the following matters:

1. *Superannuation.* The superannuation rights of co-partners are protected by the Gas Act 1948 and the Gas (Pension Rights) Regulations 1950.

2. *Safety, Health, and Welfare.* Those aspects of co-partnership which relate to joint consultation, such as safety, health, welfare, and efficiency in the operation of the services, are being dealt with under the negotiating and consultative machinery set up under Section 57 of the Gas Act.

3. *Emoluments.* Those aspects of co-partnership which relate to emoluments such as gas and appliances at reduced prices are being dealt with under the negotiating and consultative machinery set up under Section 57 of the Gas Act.

4. *Co-partnership bonuses.* The right formerly possessed by a co-partner to receive a co-partnership bonus whilst still in the service of the Area Board by whom he is employed as at the date of this arrangement shall be treated as a better Condition of Service. Co-partners as defined in the preceding sentence will receive an annual payment equivalent to the bonus paid in respect of the last completed year before March 31, 1951, for a maximum period of 15 years. Such payments shall cease as at March 31, 1966, or as at such earlier date as service with the Area Board may terminate.

5. Any securities and assets held for co-partners referred to in this arrangement other than securities and assets held in connection with superannuation schemes referred to in Clause 1 above, shall, with the consent of any Trustees concerned or if necessary by Regulation under Section 59 of the Gas Act, 1948, be distributed to the persons entitled thereto.

It has been the practice in some undertakings for a part of the bonus to be paid direct into a pensions fund as the employee's contribution. In future the gross amount of the bonus is to be paid to the employee, who will make his pensions contribution out of his salary, presumably by deduction at source.

The amount paid as a "better conditions" bonus will not rank for pension. Where co-partnership bonus has in the past been included for pensions calculations and covered by a regulation, this will be suitably amended.

Although the arrangement provides for the distribution of the securities and assets held for co-partners it is, of course, not intended that amounts previously credited to pensions funds will be liquidated. These will remain in the pensions funds to the credit of the employees concerned.

Subject to the consent of the Trustees or, if necessary, by a regulation under Section 59 of the Gas Act, the assets will be distributed as soon as practicable after the end of March. Some short delay is, however, inevitable, since the share certificates will have to be prepared for each stock holder and sent to the Bank of England, which, since vesting date, has dealt with the registration of co-partners' stock. Certain other investments will also have to be realised.

No doubt many co-partners will want to realise their stock for cash, but in the interest of the holders it is urged that, wherever possible, it should be retained. In those cases where stock is realised, in view of the present economic position of the country, members are asked to consider the vital need for investments in National Savings certificates.

A guide to co-partners on the various points involved is to be issued as soon as possible.

National consultative committee

The committee met on February 8, when T. FERNLEY was elected chairman, and R. W. ILEY vice-chairman.

It was agreed to recommend the National Executive Council to approve the appointment of F. EADE, south-eastern district, to the N.J.C. for gas staff, to fill the vacancy caused through the resignation of P. ASHEN. The chief organisation officer, J. E. N. DAVIS, and myself, who are due to retire from the joint council on March 31, were also nominated for re-appointment.

A report was given on the setting up of a national and area joint councils for senior officers. Several meetings of the negotiating committee have been held, and by the time these notes are read a constitution should have been agreed.

Consideration was given to insurance protection for staff who are likely to be attacked or injured in the course of their duties with the boards, and to compensatory payment to officers transferred from one undertaking to another within the area of the employing board. It was agreed to make recommendations to the representatives on the area joint councils and N.J.C. respectively.

Deputation on pay and pension rights of reservists to wait on Minister

AFTER repeatedly asking the Minister of Health to safeguard rights and interests of reservists recalled for service, NALGO's law and parliamentary committee is continuing to press for legislation, and, in view of the continuing delay, has asked the Minister of Local Government and Planning to receive a deputation.

Members of the Association who were reservists and recalled for service in the armed forces are still uncertain about their superannuation rights and their entitlement to make-up of civilian pay. As soon as it was known that such members were being recalled for military service, NALGO asked the Minister of Health to give sanction for local authorities to make payments to and safeguard the superannuation and re-employment rights of any members of their staff called for service.

Since reservists are not recalled under the National Service Act, 1948, the provisions of the Superannuation (Local Government Staffs) (National Service) Rules, 1949, do not apply, nor do the provisions of Part II of the National Service Act, 1948, relating to reinstatement in civil employment. The power given to local authorities by the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act, 1939, to make up civil pay is no longer effective.

At the outbreak of the last war, preliminary provisions were made to enable local authorities to make up pay and preserve superannuation rights, and these provisions were later extended by the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act, 1939, and by the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, 1944. Last August, NALGO asked for similar provisions to be made to cover reservists, to which the Minister of Health replied that the make-up of the balance of civilian pay was being considered, and that local authorities making inquiries were being advised that officers called up should be given leave of absence, so that their period in the Forces would not be counted as a break for superannuation purposes.

NALGO sent further letters to the Minister, pressing for a decision. He replied that the matter was still being considered, and that meanwhile hospital boards and management committees were also being advised to treat reservists who had been recalled as being on leave of absence, to avoid a disqualifying break.

At the end of last year, the reinstatement rights of reservists were safeguarded by the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, 1950. This Act also benefited national service men by restoring lost reinstatement rights to those who voluntarily agreed to serve an extra six months in the Forces.

Readers' Forum

Another examination bar

I read with dismay the revised scheme for local government examinations. The imposition of further examination bars on those who have passed the Diploma in Public Administration constitutes yet another change in our conditions of service. Disaster lies in grouping all examinations of similar title into one category, thereby completely failing to appreciate the fundamental difference between the various groupings of subjects.

The London D.P.A. formerly consisted of six papers. It is now postgraduate. This raising of standards has been brought about through university colleges, such as that at Exeter, setting higher standards for their internal diplomas. The Exeter D.P.A. constitutes three-hour papers in ten subjects; public administration; principles of organisation and administration; British constitution; economics; statistical method; social economics; social theory and social institutions; social administration; development, structure and control of British industry; and public finance. Surely this, even though it may not exactly coincide with the new Final Administrative Examination, goes just as far.

Admittedly, those with the D.P.A., after "five years' experience in work of an administrative character," will be eligible for promotion throughout the administrative grades, but what constitutes "work of an administrative character?" If the criterion is to be the grading of the employee in the A.P.T. grades, then even in five years' time I, on the Clerical Division, will not be exempt from the final examination.

When persons have taken "Final" administrative examinations set by universities, only still to be denied suitable promotion due to extremely poor local grading—about which NALGO does not seem able to do much despite sincere local effort—then I fail to appreciate why we should be called upon to sit yet another "Final" at the whim of the N.J.C.

GORDON W. E. COLLINS, D.P.A. (Oxon.).
2, Cookworthy Road, Swilly, Plymouth.

"Take the 'outside' exam"

Does the average member realise what the long term effect of the new examination regulations is going to be? Let us, by all means, seek evidence of qualifications from members who require promotion. It appears, however, that the final examinations of such bodies as the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and the Corporation of Certified Secretaries will not have equal status with this new and unproved Administrative examination, except as a transitional provision; this, in spite of the fact that the former Institute was catering for local government students whilst NALGO was still experimenting with "Promotion" examinations.

It is essential, if we are to keep the salaries of qualified men in the service at least on a par with those paid in industry, that there should be mobility of such labour out of, as well as into, the service.

Unless professional qualifications such as the Chartered Institute of Secretaries are recognised as an equivalent, we shall have the position, after a few years, of a number of qualified staff unable to obtain promotion within the service, yet, because they have qualifications which are not recognised in industry, not able to compete for higher posts outside local government. Thus our employers will have obtained men of professional ability and qualifications within a closed labour market, at salaries which need not compete with salaries paid in industry.

My advice to those about to commence studies is: take the "outside" exam and fight for its recognition in the service. At worst, you will finish up qualified for a higher paid job in industry.

ROBERT BLOOM
Birmingham Education Office.

The new examinations cannot be described as "unproved" in so far as the N.J.C. knows the standard it wants and sets examinations accordingly. Selection of examinations, of course, rests with the individual, involving a choice between a career in the public service and one elsewhere. Incidentally, NALGO *has been catering for local government students for more than thirty years with its own examination.*

Prune the exemptions

Mr. Mitchell's "Education Twaddle" in February "L.G.S." seems a little too altruistic in championing promotion without examination, if he is not personally concerned.

Although I doubt the efficacy of the new examinations, the idea is excellent in theory. Unfortunately, being so enshrouded by conditions and exceptions, the scheme does not work in practice. On the one hand we have the successful examinee who has no guarantee of promotion, on the other we have the employers who can, and do, appoint as they like. An even more flagrant inequality is that under the new examination conditions any third-rate incompetent who has managed to scrape into an APT post can progress within the scale without any qualification whatsoever, yet the holder of a D.P.A. is stopped at Grade IV.

To render the scheme workable and equitable three things should be done; (1) drastic pruning of the exceptions; (2) compulsion on the employing authorities to appoint only successful examinees in all grades; (3) disruption of the departmental "closed shop," and the conventional stage by stage advancement from office-boy. (Appointments in a treasurer's department invariably require part of the I.M.T.A., but a minimum of three years' experience in a treasurer's department is a necessary qualification to sit for these examinations.)

Mr. Mitchell's comparison between qualified and unqualified men is specious but erroneous. Everyone, however dim-witted, gains some experience in normal working hours; the few who strive for that little extra in their leisure time are worthy of recognition. I contend that the individual who has genuinely attempted an examination and failed should be considered before the man who expects promotion merely because of his so-called experience.

J. W. B. GREGORY
Wages and Accounts Section, Town Hall, Ealing.

"Dead men's shoes"?

Is it inevitable that every infant public service should undergo the same teething troubles, without deriving some analgesic benefits from the experience of its older sisters?

The National Health Service Consultative Committee appears to think so, for its decision to press for the filling of vacancies from within each separate employing authority bears the reactionary hallmark of the bad old days in local government which NALGO and the Hadow Committee did so much to efface.

By introducing into the health service the parochialism and immobility which local government only threw off after many years of struggle, the committee is ensuring that the service shall be, for its staff, neither national nor healthy. No social service can become an efficient and coherent whole if its staffing structure splits it into a thousand different compartments. The best qualified staff will not

"No. 26, Alf, Chimney-pot loose"

be attracted to a service which allows nepotism and restricts the movement of individuals within it, denying them freedom in the choice of jobs, opportunity to widen their experience, and encouragement to make themselves proficient for advancement. Is the cramping tread of "dead men's shoes" to sound again?

My branch believes that this retrograde policy is fundamentally opposed to the interests of the health service and its staff. We have explored every constitutional means of securing further reflection and consultation by the committee.

We earnestly invite other health service branches to join us in our efforts to reverse the committee's instruction to the staff side, and secure at once for our service the benefits that public advertisement of vacancies has brought to local government.

Hon. Secretary, D. ANTOINE
Faddington Group Hospitals Branch.

In February 1950 the consultative committee resolved that any staff vacancy on a hospital board or management committee should first be notified to existing staff; that where the vacancy could not thus be suitably filled it should be notified generally within the area of the board; and that if a suitable officer were not then forthcoming, the vacancy should be publicly advertised. When the matter came before the staff side of the Administrative and Clerical Staffs Council in September, however, it was decided that no action be taken. The matter rests there, and nothing more will be done unless the consultative committee so instructs. NALGO*'s view is that officers making their career in the health service should have first opportunity of applying for vacancies, but it was unfortunately unable to persuade the staff side to that view.*

Pensioners' cost-of-living

I was pleased to read in your March issue that the service conditions committee is reporting to the N.E.C. on the Pensions (Increase) Act 1947.

In the light of ever-increasing cost of living and high taxation, the question is one of urgency, and may I express the hope that it will be dealt with more speedily. I received a letter dated May 31 last from the legal officer couched in much the same terms as the paragraph in your journal, so it would appear that nine months will have elapsed before the matter reaches the N.E.C.

I suggest that the subject is worthy of some of the vigour with which the campaign for a twenty per cent increase in the salaries of present staffs is being prosecuted, and to which increase, if granted, pensioners will have to contribute in their rates.

P. RITHERDON
50, Grange Park Road,
Leyton, E.10.

Despite condensation of the letters published, many have had to be held over this month. Letters for the April number must reach the Editor, 1 York Gate, London, N.W.1, by March 12. Please keep them short!

Early martyrs

I want to bring to your notice the remarkable similarity between the plight of the London sanitary inspector to-day and the early Christian martyrs of two thousand years ago; both men of principle and undoubted worth, sacrificed to the "mob." The early Christian by the pagan Roman, the London sanitary inspector by NALGO.

The martyrdom of our predecessors is now deplored, but I wonder how long we have to wait before the "Wise Men" of to-day realise that as glorious as the road to martyrdom may be, London sanitary inspectors can be of far more use in their earthly capacity, pursuing their chosen calling.

12, Christchurch Ave., D. LANDEG
Teddington, Middx.

Dissatisfied electricity staff

There certainly is dissatisfaction amongst electricity staffs, and your reply to "Disgusted Committee Member" in February "L.G.S." will do nothing to alleviate it.

You attempt to justify NALGO's slow motion efforts, but I have yet to hear of anything substantial having been achieved since vesting day. Is it not a fact that the B.E.A. pays the piper, and has so far successfully called the tune?

NALGO should be aware that appointments are often wrongly made. To combat this, all applicants selected for interview for any higher graded post should be interviewed and appointed by an independent committee, as in the civil service. At present many vacancies are unofficially filled before the vacancy notice appears.

You say, quite rightly, that there are adequate provisions for appeal, but the fear of repercussions deters most from taking up their case personally. Local branch officers should be aware of these cases and take appropriate action.

Your arguments against the inclusion of electricity staffs in the cost of living claim will not bear examination. The statement that a salary scales agreement has been recently concluded with the B.E.A., and therefore NALGO cannot be expected to press for a 20 per cent increase so soon, is futile. In the first place, this agreement was concluded after two years of negotiation, during which time the cost of living was going up. Secondly, the scales, when agreed, did nothing for the general division clerk.

I feel there is much disappointment amongst the rank and file of electricity staffs which will not be mitigated until NALGO, by its actions, shows itself as determined to improve the lot of that section of its members as of its local government members.

6 K.H.

The accusations in the second paragraph of "6 K.H.'s" letter do not fit the facts. Also, he still seems to misunderstand the position of electricity members in relation to the salaries claim. A full statement on this has recently been sent to secretaries of electricity branches; if "6 K.H." will contact his branch, his mind should be set at rest. No employing authority is going to leave the appointment of its staff to an independent *committee, nor does the civil service. Vague accusations of vacancies being "unofficially filled before the vacancy notice appears" are useless. Nor can local branch officers be expected to know everything that happens without the co-operation of members. If "6 K.H." has a grievance, let him take it up through his branch. He need have no fears about "repercussions" if legitimate grievances are taken up in the right way.*

A bitter experience

I feel that little thought has been given to the position of the "down-graded" officer in the electricity service.

As an officer down-graded to the general clerical grade after long years of service, I find that this is indeed a bitter experience, especially when one considers the efforts required to attain a higher grade. The cost to the boards of retaining these officers in the grades appropriate to their present salaries would surely be negligible, and would at least ensure that, where no betterment could be afforded, at least there would be no worsening.

Moreover, it now appears that any future cost of living increase may be absorbed into the plus payment. This is a worsening of conditions, since no increase may be received until the cost of living increase exceeds the plus payment.

"NON-PLUSSED"

There is every sympathy with members who, usually due to changed duties owing to re-organisation, occupy posts graded at less than their pre-vesting salaries. They do not, of course, suffer any actual loss. NALGO *took care when negotiating the salary agreement to ensure that any more favourable rights under a previous contract were preserved. Presumably, any future cost of living increase would raise the salaries attached to particular grades. "Non-plussed" is right in that case to assume that if he were still, by virtue of an existing contract, found to be receiving more than his job is judged to be worth, he*

would get no increase. Indeed, it would be unfair to others doing similar work for less money if he did. There are, of course, many opportunities for promotion in the industry.

Grading of librarians

The long awaited grading of librarians, due to come into effect on April 1—a long time after many other positions have been graded—is a sore disappointment, as only the Registration Examination of the Library Association, i.e. the Intermediate, has been recognised.

What about the Fellowship of the L.A., —i.e. the Final? Are the extra years spent in gaining the highest qualification to be ignored? If so, the inevitable result will be that the Registration Examination will be all that is worth striving for.

We know that under the new examinations scheme holders of the final of the L.A. are *eligible* for promotion to Grade X and above, but as there is no compulsion upon local authorities to make these awards, many will obviously take the precaution of appointing only Associates, at consequently lower salaries.

In previous N.J.C. awards to local government officers we have observed that qualifications have been rewarded and then further rewards have been allowed for length of service. No such factor appears in our awards, and despite 20 or 30 years' service and long standing qualifications, a Fellow of the L.A. finds himself no better off than a newly qualified Associate who has but, perhaps, five years' experience. In fact, according to the award, even in these days an unregistered librarian occupying any of the specified posts is to be graded the same as Fellows of the L.A.

FELLOWS OF THE L.A.

Military service deferred

I venture to suggest that your unfortunate correspondent, JAMES ELLWOOD—who, as an articled pupil in a surveyor's department, and studying for his testamur, was conscripted for two years when he was 18—didn't know the ropes.

Six of our members, aged from 18 to 22, have obtained deferment from national service to complete their studies and obtain engineering qualifications.

Woking Branch D. W. BRADLEY

An apathy cure

I was interested to read D. TRELAWNEY's article on apathy towards NALGO affairs among its members. He is, in fact, dealing with a vastly larger subject than that specifically relating to NALGO.

There is a general apathy towards conducting committee work, except for an extremely active minority. I doubt if many branch members give more than a cursory glance to the periodic reports of their branch executive's proceedings. The problem is twofold: (1) the attitude of "there's no need for me to be active, no shortage of others who *want* to do it" (an inherently dangerous attitude); and (2) that people generally are unnerved by the tremendous number of commissions, councils, and committees, who meet and issue reports which it is (they are told) advisable for them to study.

If a member has other interests—other committees, studying for promotion, domestic affairs—and has, in fact, no spare time, he is hardly likely to offer his services, however much he would like to, to his branch E.C. Give a man too many activities and he will do justice to none of them.

A dynamic lead is essential if apathy is to be beaten. But something else is required to break the inertia and impel people to follow that lead. Perhaps if a member were quite sure that time would not be wasted; that the chairman would conduct meetings with a rod of iron, and not enter into the general discussion; that business would be dealt with clearly, concisely, and expeditiously; then perhaps some compromise might be effected between "fire-watching" and activity.

I believe L.G.S. can do much in general terms to re-enliven our organisation, but the branch magazine, being more specialised and intimate, can do even more.

DENIS H. CREEGAN

27, Alverstone Road, Wallasey, Cheshire.

MY BOOKSHELF

by EDWARD KAY

"PUBLIC expenditure on national health is like expenditure on a life-boat or a fire-engine; even more, it is a long-term investment," wrote Sir George Newman when he was chief medical officer to the Ministry of Health, and this is the theme of Professor W. M. FRAZER'S **History of English Public Health 1834-1939** (Baillière, Tindall, and Cox. 35s.).

The book bears comparison with Sir John Simon's **English Sanitary Institutions**, and, in many respects, is worthy of its famous predecessor. It is thorough and logical; the material is conveniently arranged so that the reader can see the social circumstances and the public health reactions in relation to each other at each successive period; medicine, science, and economics are skilfully interwoven. Professor Frazer never forgets the rôle of social forces outside, but influencing, his own theme. But, unhappily, it is all presented in a style without colour or warmth, which robs the great story of its dramatic interest. Students and specialists will use the book and find most of what they need, but had it been more imaginatively written it might have become a classic for the delight and edification of a wider reading public.

This is indeed a pity. In an age when popular resentment is, or is claimed to be, easily aroused at the inroads of government, it is useful to remember how things were when there was no interference with slum landlords or sweating industrialists or individuals spreading disease and death.

Professor Frazer gives all proper emphasis to the part which local authorities and their officers have played in remedying all this; the Act of 1848, he says, "led to the creation in all the local areas of a body of skilled administrators—medical officers of health, engineers, surveyors, inspectors of nuisances—who were, before the end of the century, to bring about a sanitary revolution."

He cites, too, important occasions on which the local authorities were by-passed, or at least were given less than their due share of administrative control. The Central Board of Health, under the leadership of Edwin Chadwick, though well-informed and idealistic, foundered because of its centralising tendencies. Again, in 1911, when national health insurance was established, local authorities were given no part in its conduct; as Sir Arthur Newsholme said, had the scheme been referred to "persons expert in local administration . . . it would have benefited immensely, and much extravagant expenditure would have been saved."

The unions' fight

NORMAN CITRINE'S **Trade Union Law** (Stevens. 45s.) will be valuable to lawyers, union officers, and students, but NALGO members generally should read the historical chapters. They show how hard trade unionists have had to fight for the right to organise in protection of their interests.

Planning

A little late in the field and not outstanding of its kind is **The Willesden Survey 1949** (Corporation of Willesden. No price stated). It is written by JOHN C. MORRIS, the borough engineer, and was prepared as a basis for revising the planning of the town when this was still the corporation's function. Now it is somewhat wistfully addressed to the county council.

NORMAN BROWNING'S **National Parks and Access to the Countryside** (Thames Bank. 21s.) offers persuasive, balanced treatment of this over-written subject.

Also received

The Advisory Panel System. Council for the Preservation of Rural England. 6d.

Movable Dwellings. Town & Country Planning Association. 2s. 6d.

The Transport Act as it affects road transport. Second supplement. G. W. Quick Smith. Thames Bank Publishing Co. 6s. post free.

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"ABINGDON" WRITES HIS NALGO

DIARY

FIFTEEN New York Times' editorials in the past three months, on the necessity of "doing justice" to public servants "who are trying to support families on under-sized pay envelopes," have not been, as it seemed, good allied support for NALGO's pay claim. They were a reminder to city and state officials in America that their servants are human beings, with a market basket to fill, who are awaiting a decision on salary increases to help them solve some of their immediate cost of living worries.

Our own words have been echoed: ". . . these pay rises have to come—most employees in business and industry have had them already . . ." Hitting directly at the only defence, the New York Times said that the drastic taxation which is ahead cannot be used as an excuse for failing to do justice by local and city employees for, in fact, higher taxes are a factor in their need for higher pay, because these servants also have to pay taxes.

Equal pay campaigner

"And is the pay all right?" asked Wynford Vaughan Thomas, when he was interviewing WINIFRED HARRIS, a Bermondsey library assistant, in a recent television broadcast. "No," said Miss Harris, "but I am helping NALGO in its campaign for equal pay, so I hope it will be better eventually." That straight answer from eighteen-year-old Miss Harris had behind it the strength of two years' campaigning, including lobbying Members of Parliament.

Her enthusiasm for the cause is unfortunately not shared by the country's cinema managers, who are still not convinced that there is a public demand for Jill Craigie's film on equal pay, "To be a Woman." The only way to right this misapprehension is for every woman to write to her local cinema manager asking for the film to be shown.

Civic research

With local government records going back to before the thirteenth century, anyone who sets out to make a survey is tackling a heavy task. G. MORLEY DAVIES, southern district public relations officer, tells me that he has been engaged on such research for some time, and has found that municipal guide books often contain useful material for his studies. If any member has any municipal guide books to spare, preferably published before 1940, and will be kind enough to send them to Mr. Morley Davies at 4, Richmond Terrace, Clifton, Bristol 8, they will be gratefully received.

School for guides

My midlands readers interested in local history and monuments may like to hear that there will be a school for guides held at the Chancellor's Hall, Birmingham, from April 2 to 13. The course has been arranged by the Standing Conference for Local History in conjunction with Birmingham University, and is intended for amateur as well as professional guides. The secretary of the conference, at 24, Bedford Square, W.C.1, will provide details on request.

Early holidays

Despite the many enterprising members and their friends who have accepted the offer of special reduced terms to holiday-makers visiting the Croyde and Cayton holiday centres during the period May 12 to June 2, there are still vacancies during these weeks. The early holidays are a great saving, and all the usual facilities and entertainments are arranged. Weekly rates for this period: members £4 4s., non-members £4 14s. 6d.

New Building Society officer

I welcome to NALGO the newly-appointed Building Society officer, GEORGE H. LEES, who comes to us

after long service with the Woolwich Equitable Building Society. Although a Londoner by birth, education, and habit, he has seen much of the world, having studied in France, Belgium, and Germany, before he joined the Woolwich Equitable.

He completed four tours of flying operations during the war, and rose to the rank of flight-lieutenant as wireless operator and master gunner, and was awarded the D.F.C. before anti-aircraft shell-splinters put him out of action and into an Air Ministry staff welfare job. Mr. Lees, who is a Fellow of the Valuers' Association, took up a managerial post in East Suffolk in 1947, and is already known to some members in that area.

NALGO colours

The rising costs of raw materials are sure to have some effect on future prices of NALGO colours, and members who wish to buy from existing stocks at present prices should write at once to the Special Activities Department at 1, York Gate, N.W.1, for the price list showing the full range of goods and prices. One item, the brushed woollen scarf—excellent value at 9s.—will not be repeated at this price.

New N.E.C. member

When I welcomed A. ANDERTON back to the N.E.C. last month, I wrongly described him as senior accountancy assistant at Walsall. He is, in fact, finance officer to Walsall Hospital Management Committee.

Gifts for the B & O Fund

Hendon branch, not satisfied with having raised £14 18s. 8d. for the B & O Fund, as a result of its Christmas draw, arranged a handicrafts and hobbies exhibition, organised a raffle, and presented the Fund with an additional £16 12s. C. A. TAVNER, branch public relations officer, is sure that such activities are within the scope of every branch, and offers to advise any branch how to organise them.

So far, however, Middlesbrough branch has topped the bill for Christmas draws, for last month they presented the Fund with £403 1s. 1d. G. HILTON, who organised it, well deserved the tribute paid to him by A. GALLON, chairman of the north eastern district committee, who received the cheque for the Fund.

Another welcome gift to the Fund came from J. R. YEARDLEY, retired member of the West Riding County Officers' branch, who gave ten guineas to mark his twenty-one years of retirement.

New Year honours

Three more members who were awarded the M.B.E. in the New Year Honours, and whose names were not published last month, are: W. HEAVEY, senior dockmaster, P.L.A.; A. HUTCHINGS, M.I.Mun.E., engineer and surveyor, Cuckfield; and G. S. JENNINGS, chief assistant surveyor, Southend-on-Sea. I hope they will accept our belated congratulations.

Obituary

I regret to record the deaths of the following members: S. A. CORNER, Romford branch secretary, and member of the metropolitan district committee; and J. W. MCKILLOP, C.B.E., J.P., retired clerk and treasurer, Inverness, a founder-member of the North of Scotland branch, and its first secretary and treasurer.

House exchange

FOLKESTONE. Four-room bungalow, hall and kitchen, overlooking sea, for three-bedroom house in N.W. London. Miss E. M. Rodgers, 39, Farley Road, Selsdon, Surrey.

Education notes

by K. S. CARTER

MEMBERS have drawn my attention to three small errors which crept into my article on the new examinations scheme last month. These mistakes are regretted, and I hope the following amendments will correct any wrong impressions which other members may have formed :

Page 361 : The first condition applying to the final administrative examination is that only officers who have had five years' service with a public authority, as defined by the regulations, *will be eligible* to take the examination.

Page 362 : Among the technical qualifications for engineers which will confer eligibility for promotion to A.P.T. IV, and to higher A.P.T. grades, provided the officer has had five years' approved experience, are the Higher National Certificates in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and civil engineering. Ordinary national certificates have not been so recognised.

In the list of other qualifications, *Institute of Landscape Artists* (*Associateship*) should, of course, have been *Institute of Landscape Architects* (*Associateship*).

Summer school scholarships

So far, 19 branches have notified their intention of offering scholarships to this year's NALGO summer schools. This is an improvement on last year, but still only a very small proportion of the potential, and it is hoped that branches which have not yet considered helping members in this way will put an item on the agenda for their next meeting, bearing in mind that special provision is to be made at the Oxford school for administrative examination candidates and, if there is sufficient interest, for members in the electricity, gas, transport, and health services. In addition, there will be opportunities for detailed study of some of the individual local government services.

The eastern district education committee is offering four scholarships of £5 each for any school, the choice to rest with the successful candidate. Application should be made to E. G. Lees, Finance Department, County Hall, Hertford.

Besides those already published, the following are offering scholarships :

Area education and district committees : East Midlands—3 (2 for Sweden ; 1 for Oxford) ; North Eastern—4 ; Southern —1 ; South Western—1 ; South Wales and Monmouthshire—8 ; West Midlands —7 (6 for Oxford ; 1 for Sweden).

Branches : B.E.A. (Midlands)—1 ; Brighton—1 ; Coventry—1 or 2 ; Derby —1 ; Hinckley—2 (for Sweden) ; Leicester—2 ; Mansfield—1 ; Somerset—1 ; South Shields—1 ; and Wiltshire—1.

The Southern provincial council and Ipswich staff joint committees are each offering two scholarships, and the Oxford, Hastings, and Swindon staff joint committees are each offering one—that offered by Oxford applies to the Swedish school.

Information about all these scholarships may be obtained from branch education secretaries.

Change of plans for Oxford

Just before going to press it was reluctantly decided, because of a significant increase in college charges, to reduce this school to one week from June 30. Plans for study groups will be as announced, and other arrangements will be notified to branches later.

Success for N.C.I. students

The first twenty students of the NALGO Correspondence Institute to take the intermediate examination of the Corporation of Certified Secretaries sat last December. We are pleased to report that all passed except one, who was referred in one subject. Our first final candidate, appropriately enough, gained a distinction in education. This may, I think, be regarded as a good beginning.

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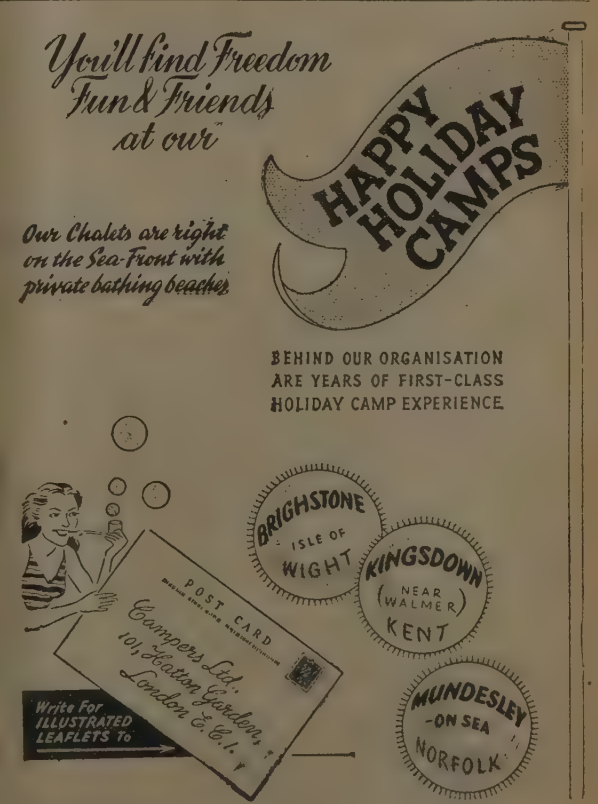
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Out of the mouths——

A small boy laboriously spelt out a corporation notice, "No Vehicular Access."

"What does that mean, mummy?" he asked.

"It means pedestrians only, dear," came the answer.

"Then why don't they say so?" rejoined the small boy.

Words of comfort

A scientist, wishing to reassure an anxious world, uttered (without a smile) this monumental sentence: "The scale of atomic attack necessary to destroy the whole surface of the globe is much larger than people realise."

Coaxing Cupid

"He's twenty-eight, good-looking, worth a couple of hundred thousand, and will remain a bachelor over my dead body." *Collier's Magazine.*

Off the ration

Suddenly she leaned towards Gaston, kissed him and bit his lip. They both ate slowly. *From a novel in a Sunday paper.*

Definitions

The perfect L.G.O.? A man who can think of a valid objection to any possible solution. Anon.

Admiration: our polite recognition of another's resemblance to ourselves. *Ambrose Bierce.*

Rush hour: The hour at which the traffic is almost at a standstill. J. B. Morton.

An educated person: one who can concentrate on one subject for more than two minutes. *Dr. R. A. Zillikan.*

N.B. for students

These hints on how to answer examination papers were recently given by Professor Andrew M. Claye, of Leeds: avoid illegibility, irrelevance, illiteracy, imbecility, and thus with any luck the ignominy of failure. *P.S.* If you can possibly manage it, avoid ignorance of the subject.

Musical interludes

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Encore

Auntie, did you feel no pain
Falling from that apple tree?
Would you do it, please, again?
'Cos my friend here didn't see.

Harry Graham.

Sanitary inspectors à la mode

The question of whether a bowler or a soft hat is the appropriate headgear for a sanitary inspector was discussed by Bristol health committee today. *News item in the London "Star."*

Not smart enough

Man thinks he's smarter
Than the beasts and the fishes
But I never knew an animal
That had to wash dishes.

E. B. White in "The New Yorker."

Dialects

I—Lancashire—"Tha walks along 'ere till tha gets to Reet Sams, an' keep on till tha gets to t'get oil in't wall. Get's gone though but th'oils still theer, then tha goes through it and keep straight on tut pike."

Can any readers supply typical examples of other county dialects?

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SCOTTISH NOTES

Employers promise to give early consideration to pay claim

by JOHN L. ROBSON

AT ITS MEETING on February 17, the National Joint Industrial Council for local government staff in Scotland referred the salaries claim to its executive committee, which will meet in Edinburgh on March 21.

The following is a summary of the statement made by the staff side.

After outlining the trend of events since the war, which had led to a movement of staff from the established fields of employment into the new industries, where, in many respects, better pay and conditions were being offered, the statement went on:

"There are three main headings under which this application falls to be considered: 1. The present cost of living; 2. the extent of movement out of the service; 3. conditions obtaining in competitive spheres of employment.

"It is conceded in all quarters that the increase in the cost of living now, when compared with 1939, shows an increase of 85 per cent. More recent comparison shows that present costs, compared with 1946, show an increase of not less than 20 per cent. This means that salary levels provided under the Charter in 1946 are now quite out of keeping with present day conditions, and totally inadequate."

There was, perhaps, the statement read, no real point in emphasising this so long as it was realised that a vast number of officers were receiving salaries much below the national average wage of £6 4s. 1d., and, in the lower ranges of the General Division, much below the minimum rates in other fields of employment.

To what extent were salary increases justified in the local government service? Relying on official information, the average earnings of large groups of workers had gone up since 1939 by over 130 per cent, and between 1938 and 1949 the total of all private incomes went up by 116 per cent. Since 1939, salaries in Scotland had increased by between 65 and 70 per cent. Within recent months there had been increases to teachers, manual workers, and platform staffs in road transport, and within the past few weeks the Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal had made an award to the clerical class in the civil service—a class which compared with the General Division. (*At this point reference was made to the comparative tables which were submitted showing present salaries in the civil service, banks, insurance companies, and local government.*)

If the Joint Industrial Council adhered to the fair wage principle, the statement went on, there could be no doubt about its decision. The extent of the movement out of the service warranted the most serious consideration, for the officers involved were generally the qualified and experienced. During the last 18 months in Scotland more than 600 officers had left the service for better paid posts, 300 of them going to outside industry. Except by increasing salaries and sometimes by appointing less qualified staff, replacement was difficult.

Associated with the present application was the fact that the existing General Division showed a disparity compared with its English counterpart, a disparity which caused serious dissatisfaction. Local government was a single service, and conditions throughout that service, in Scotland and England, should be uniform. There could be no justification for lower standards in Scotland, and part of the application was concerned with remedying that defect. In other comparable services there was no such distinction between Scottish and English rates of pay.

The urgency attaching to the claim was emphasised, and it was hoped that the employers would ensure that consideration was given to the case at an early date.

School attendance officers

Since the Council could not reach agreement that school attendance officers should be paid on the same scale as their counterparts in England and Wales, the staff side notified its intention of referring the matter to arbitration.

District conference discusses branch notices of motion for Blackpool

by JOHN ROBERTSON

THE DISTRICT committee held at Aberdeen on February 10 was divided into two sessions, the morning session dealing with district committee business, and the afternoon session taking the form of a conference to discuss branch notices of motion for possible submission to the Blackpool Conference.

As was to be expected, the district committee devoted most of its time to discussing the progress of the salaries campaign in Scotland. After considering the conduct of the campaign at some length, it approved the decisions of the campaign sub-committee. The many points of view expressed will, I am sure, prove helpful to the committee in carrying out its important task.

The afternoon conference was opened by the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, and SIR ALAN MACLEAN, Convenor of Aberdeen County Council, and Treasurer G. R. MCINTOSH, C.B.E., were also present. Motions discussed covered the Scottish Charter and other service conditions; negotiating machinery; superannuation; and the adaptation of the Association machinery. The standard of oratory was disappointing, however, and it is impossible to single out even one contribution of note.

None of the motions opposed by the finance and general purposes committee was approved, but the right of the mover of a motion to reply to the discussion (which is not allowed under standing orders) was the subject of long debate. In my opinion, the mover should enjoy this right. Undoubtedly, the conference afforded branches a valuable opportunity of bringing forward matters of particular interest to them, and each branch will now consider the advisability of submitting the motions to the parent Conference.

No report of this meeting would be complete without special mention of the Aberdeen members, who made the excellent conference arrangements.

Scottish summer school

The 1951 summer school will be held in the McIntosh Hall, St. Andrew's University from August 25 to September 1, and lectures will cover a wide field of interest. The programme is still in its preliminary stages, but topics for discussion will probably include: Economic consequence of government in Scotland; Authority and freedom; and Scottish government (central and local).

The Scottish district committee is offering three bursaries of five guineas each to three separate branches which have fewer than a hundred members and cannot themselves afford to help would-be students. It is hoped that members will attend in good numbers to ensure a successful school, both educationally and socially. In addition to the opening dinner, other social events will be arranged when the numbers proposing to attend are known. To facilitate planning, therefore, intending students are asked to enrol for the school as soon as possible.

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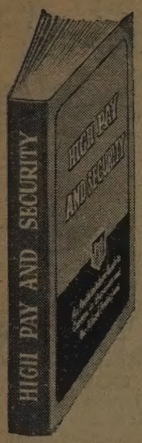

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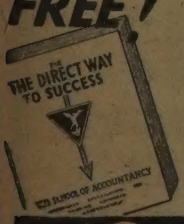

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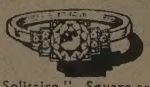

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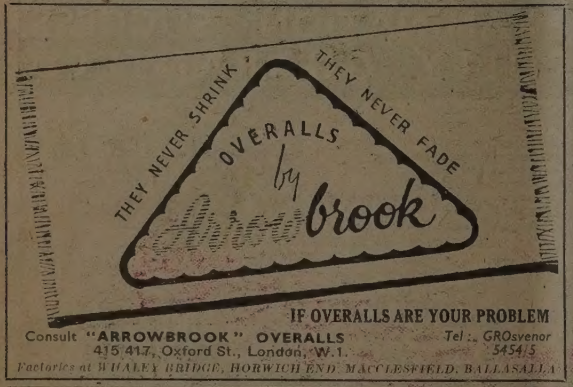

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